

such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make/use the invention.

The Office Action stated that Claim 1 recites the limitation, "an inner sealing wall located within the protective outer wall . . ." in line 11 of the claim; the specification does not disclose an inner wall located within the protective outer wall; the disclosure only discloses an inner sealing wall adjacent the protective outer wall. The Office Action further stated that Claim 5 recites the same limitation in line 11 of the claim

Applicants have responsively amended Claims 1 and 5 to include the feature that the inner sealing wall is adjacent to the protective outer wall (rather than within it). Dependent Claims 2, 4 and 6-7 either depend from Claim 1 or Claim 5, and therefore incorporate this amendment by reference.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Office Action stated that Claims 1, 2 and 4-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murakami, US patent No. 4,551,743 in view of HO et al., US patent No. 5,747,866. With respect to arguments advanced by Applicants in the previous amendment and response, the Office Action stated that they are not persuasive. With respect to the argument that there is no motivation to combine Ho and Murakami, the Office Action stated that Ho and Murakami both teach trench isolation structures, and that Ho teaches that including a nitride layer over the oxide liner can reduce stress during fabrication of a trench isolation structure. With respect to the argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicants' invention, the Office Action noted that the features upon which the Applicants rely (i.e., the requirement of the inner sealing wall being formed in a shallow region exclusively) are not recited in the claim(s).

Applicants have herein responsively amended claims 1 and 5 to include the feature that the inner sealing wall is formed within the shallow region exclusively. Dependent

Claims 2, 4 and 6-7 either depend from Claim 1 or Claim 5, and incorporate this amendment by reference. Therefore, for the reasons set forth in the prior amendment and response, these claims are patentable over the prior art of record. Moreover, Applicants submit that the addition of this feature to the claims would not require further search or consideration because the Office Action indicated that the Examiner fully considered these arguments.

Conclusion

All pending claims are now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is also encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for prompt resolution of any outstanding issues which may impede allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Min Cao, et al.

By *Timothy Rex Croll*
Timothy Rex Croll
Reg. No. 36,771

Agilent Technologies, Inc.
Legal Department, 51UPD
Intellectual Property Administration
P.O. Box 58043
Santa Clara, CA 95052-8043

Dated: August 8, 2000

Tel.: 650/857-4881